10: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1945 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7



586 291 178 fully blended together, but the weaving of these skirts was almost a lost art at the time of the invasion.

291 865 562 Little children were wrapped in blankets or in garments that were cast off by their elders. When romping boys began to run around they did not bother with clothes until they were five or six, or even older. Little girls usually began to wrap a small *longyi* about their waists at three or four. Elders often went about with scant loin cloths, but very seldom did they appear without any clothing.

291 177 With the rise of national self-consciousness, the Karens tried an adaptation of their national dress and, finding the old smock ill-adapted to modern conditions, they invented a jacket cut after the style of the ordinary European lounge jacket made of the native cloth and embroidered with some of the designs of the original smocks. There were many patterns of these and they became very popular among the younger men in the cities and towns and among older boys in schools. They were a sort of blazer such as is worn in schools in Europe or [562] America. A few Karens adopted the European style of men's dress, but few women in the cities wore anything except the usual Burmese costume.

291 184 562 773 Among the Bwès and Pakus, another tribe near Toungoo, the women all wore skirts of an identical pattern. This had a black ground with two or three narrow horizontal stripes at about the height of the knees. But among the Sgaws there was a large number of patterns. The most common was a conventional design of horizontal stripes of various shades of red and in the middle a "python skin" in clouded pattern. This commemorated the old myth of the woman who was stolen by the

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7



says: "Fan away all illness, failure, stupidity, and wretchedness." Then fanning upwards, he says: "Fan on all prosperity, health, and power." After this he ties a thread on the child's arm and gives it the name that he and the mother have chosen for it.

Among the Sgaw Karen I find that no special naming customs exist. However, according to our Western ideas, a curious selection of names prevails. One little girl was called Miss Thunder because, as was explained to me by her father, she was born at the time of a thundred storm. The name of a personal peculiarity, a color, an ancestor (especially of one who was prosperous or powerful), a flower, an animal, or a month may serve as a personal name. I know of men who bear such names as Tiger, Eel, Pole Star, Gladness, Yellow, Teacher-come (the person with this last name was born on the day a missionary first visited his village), besides many others equally odd.

Nicknames are in vogue among Karen children, as they are among their fellows in the Western hemisphere. Nicknames of a special class are those given by parents to disguise their love of, and their satisfaction in, their offspring, in order to keep the demons away from the latter. Such names suggest parental contempt and lack of affection in the hope of deceiving the evil spirits into thinking that the parents can not be injured through the injury or loss of their children. This practice is illustrated by names like Stink-pot, Rotten-fish, Lame-dog, etc., which often stick to men through life.[4]

Although boys are much more desired than girls, the latter are not mistreated or abandoned, as they are in China and other Oriental countries. The Karen possess a considerable degree of parental affection. Only in extreme danger, as formerly in the case of raids, would parents desert a female child. My observation is that Karen parents are too indulgent to their children and do not exercise as much control over them as would be good for them. Twins are not uncommon among these people, and triplets are not unknown. Twins are considered as having only one "k'la" between them. If one of the pair dies, the early death of the other is feared. Its wrist is, therefore, carefully tied with a cord, and every precaution is taken to prevent the escape of the "k'la." I presume that

[4] Parents sometimes express their satisfaction over the male sex of a child by applying to him a nickname indicative of the presence of the male genitals. Such appellations, as terms of endearment, are regularly recognized names and carry no opprobrium with them.